

I won't enumerate the specific mistakes I've made. That would be to dwell on trivialities. Everything I do is just a fraction of one big on-going mistake.

So, there you have it. My only defense is no defense at all -- a comprehensive admission of total guilt. I here cede all hope, and place my very self at your mercy. Have done with me.

-- James Miller Robinson

Delegacion Iztapalapa, Mexico

ON THE VERANDAH

A screened porch. The house was old, crumbling, condemned, soon to be razed to make way for an arid marble annex to the Library of Congress. As summer started to steam, we found refuge there. Whoever came to the front door felt mild airs lap his cheek as we opened it, was bound to hear ice chunk against the inside of a Libby glass

pitcher from back of the house, three rooms away, no matter what time of day. A huge fig tree spread gluey, dog-scented shadows through the yard, drenched the porch in a wavery undersea only candleflecks of sunlight could get through. It stuck the hand-shaped prints of its leaves on parts of our bodies as we played we were plaster casts poured

from famous Greek statues. There was one blank wall across the yard from us, high fences on both sides, no one to see us. We would vaseline our skin, strike poses, make love straddling a kitchen chair, you riding my lap, I sometimes riding yours, fall asleep after on the wicker settee, a thin Kashmir shawl shrouding our crossed fallen

limbs. We were living the Southern Decadence we read about, took long, hot baths, ate peaches in the nude, drinking the juice from each other. I did not care for the warm tallow that held us together, the incense, the chants, the Tantric poses you would assume, though I could stroke your back for hours, the breath of my mouth softly ruffling your hair.